Hiring of private property by Army, Navy and Air Force

2361. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force take on rent, private properties for residential and/or official purposes;

(b) if so, the details of the guidelines, if any, for hiring and dehiring of such properties;

(c) whether a number of properties hired by Defence Establishment in Delhi/New Delhi have not been vacated after the termination of lease even though the owners wanted them for their *bona fide* needs;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) by when such properties are likely to be vacated?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the existing guidelines, houses can be hired for defence purposes, subject to willingness of the owner. After the expiry of hiring period, the houses will ordinarily be dehired. During the agreed hiring period, the house can be dehired on the request of the owner, subject to approval of the Government. Renewal of hiring for a fresh period beyond initial hiring period can be resorted to with the willingness of the owner.

(c) to (e) Properties are normally handed over to the respective owners after termination of lease Seven properties in Delhi have been sanctioned for dehiring, but could not be handed over to their respective owners for reasons of dispute of ownership, non-availability of the owner, or being under unauthorised occupation. All these buildings can be handed over as soon as authorised owner is available. One property of Air Force is to be sanctioned for dehiring.

Natural calamities in Jammu and Kashmir

2362. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that heavy snowfall and avalanches during the winter killed many persons and damaged property in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the compensation paid to next of kins of deceased and the steps taken to reconstruct damaged properties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) and (b) The unprecedented snowfall and consequential avalanches in the month of February, 2005 caused extensive damage to life and property. Latest reports from the State indicate that 283 persons besides 14 ITBP, 6 BRO (GREF) and 6 BSF personnel lost their lives, while 28,787 houses were fully/partially damaged. 91,780 hectares of cropped area, 1,03,100 hectares of horticulture were damaged besides loss to sericulture and loss of livestock. There was also damage to the power sector, roads and bridges and other civic infrastructure.

(c) The next of the kin of the deceased are entitled forRs.50,000/- as *ex-gratia* out of the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF). An amount of Rs.50,000/-was also announced by the Prime Minister out of the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. An amount of Rs.50.00 crore was released as an immediate assistance for the calamity. A Central Team has also visited the State for an on the spot damage assessment and requirement of funds. Further assistance will be released based on the report of the Central Team and the norms and guidelines thereof.

Use of Nano Carbon

†2363. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a test on 'Nano Carbon[1] has been done in Defence (Security) Research Laboratory, Kanpur;

(b) whether it is also a fact that clothes made of Nano Carbon would be impenetrable and as a result soldiers of our Army would feel a great relief;

(c) whether it is also a fact that 'Nano Carbon' is also helpful in making tankers and bunkers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.